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Pacific Partnership 2013: Mission in Gizo

Filed under [HEATH](#) [HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DISASTER RELIEF](#) [PUBLIC HEALTH](#) (NO COMMENTS)

By Lt. Cmdr. Lori Christensen, environmental health officer, [U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery](#)



Lt. Dustin Smith and Project Hope volunteer nurses speak about difficulties that can arise when delivering medical care during Pacific Partnership 2013. Working at the invitation of each host nation, U.S. Navy forces are joined by medical personnel from other U.S. military branches and other nations that include Australia, Canada, Colombia, France, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea and New Zealand. The mission is to provide medical assistance and strengthen disaster-response preparedness. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class [redacted])

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Hello from Lola Island.

We completed our mission in Gizo this morning and now most of the advance liaison

(ADVON) team has gone back to Honiara to meet up with the [USS Pearl Harbor](#) and participate in the Guadalcanal Anniversary celebration. Regina (the family doc) and me are heading up to the remote Choiseul Island to conduct some training for the women’s council there on a variety of health and medical topics.

While it would be nice to be part of the history of the Guadalcanal ceremony, we’re both glad to be continuing on with the mission! Then it’s back to Honiara (the capital city of the Sollies) and finally home on the 18th. It’s been a lot of hot, hard work, but also fun and so professionally rewarding!

Our mission in Gizo was a huge success. It was the shortest of the missions for our ADVON team, which made planning even more challenging than that in Papua New Guinea. We had just a few days to plan and prepare for the arrival of the USS Pearl Harbor. We had a lot of fun with the crew of the Pearl Harbor and were impressed with how prepared they were to jump in and get to work! There were U.S., Aussie, Canadian and New Zealand forces on board so our hosts had to sort through a variety of English accents!

Hope the BUMED Medical Service Corps personnel had a happy birthday! We had our own little celebration here, complete with “cake” made from Meals Ready to Eat (MRE) parts. Yummy!

I send warm regards and am looking forward to coming home.

Cheers,

Lori

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